

Many lake residents may have already heard about the Domestic Use program through LCRA's public outreach and education efforts. So far, this has included news releases, letters to lake residents, and informational meetings with lake interest groups, real estate agents and elected officials. However, more effort is needed to ensure that everyone taking water from the lakes has a contract and is following necessary water conservation requirements.

As of November 5, 2010, LCRA had processed over 800 domestic use contract applications to take over 1,000 acre-feet a year out of the lakes. We estimate there are 5,500 pumps taking about 4,500 acre-feet of water from the Highland Lakes each year. Although there is still a long way to go to achieve full compliance with the program, this 800 figure represents more than a tenfold increase from a year ago thanks to these outreach and education efforts.

LCRA's domestic use compliance efforts are far from over. In the near future, LCRA staff will meet with the Board of Directors to discuss strategies to ensure compliance. These steps may include:

- Efforts to draw positive attention to those who have domestic use contracts. This could involve providing customers a means to visibly mark their intake pipes to show they have domestic use contracts;
- Additional news releases, newspaper ads and meetings with local news media;
- Updated surveys to identify those who are still pumping water from the Highland Lakes without domestic use contracts;
- Continued education and outreach for those who do not have domestic use contracts, including door-to-door visits in lakeside neighborhoods; and
- Other actions to increase compliance that may be approved by the LCRA Board.

LCRA is planning for long-term water needs. Accounting for water use through the domestic use contracts is critical to ensuring that a sufficient water supply will be available for existing and future water needs. LCRA is a non-taxing entity and does not receive any revenues from taxes. Rather, water rates, including revenues from domestic use contracts, pay for LCRA's costs of managing the lakes, protecting water quality, maintaining water conservation programs and providing flood response. As you probably know, as a government entity, LCRA does not make a profit from its rates, but instead seeks only to cover the cost of providing services. In addition, the contracts require the efficient, non-wasteful use of water and water use restrictions during drought so that everyone is equally sharing the responsibility of managing our limited water supplies to ensure that there is enough water for the future.

For more information about the program, you may contact Mark Jordan, Manager of River Management at 800-776-5272, ext. 4023, or Anissa Menefee, 800-776-5272, ext. 3231, or go to LCRA's web site at <http://www.lcra.org/water/domestic> .

